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Missiles

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum*

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* The information contained in the addendum was received after the submission of the main report.

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II. Replies received from Member States

Islamic Republic of Iran

[Original: English]
[30 September 2010]

1. Given the complex nature of the issue of missiles, dealing with such an important issue requires a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory approach. To meet this need, the item of "the issue of missiles in all its aspects" was first introduced, at the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, into the agenda of the General Assembly in 1999. Since then, notable progress has been made in addressing the issue of missiles within the framework of the United Nations.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/176), without necessarily agreeing to all of its points. In view of the complex nature of the issue, the successful conclusion of the report represents a positive step forward in the United Nations efforts to address the issue of missiles in all its aspects. As noted in the report, the panel succeeded in deliberating upon key issues related to missiles and identified some elements, as listed in paragraphs 17 and 21 of the report, for consideration in further discussions of the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

3. With respect to subparagraphs 17 (b) and (h), the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that in addressing the issue of missiles in all its aspects, a distinction should be made between the field of non-conventional and conventional ordnance. Presently, non-conventionally armed ballistic and cruise missiles pose the most serious threat to international peace and security. We note with grave concern that nuclear tipped missiles continue to have an important role in the doctrine of some States, as stated in paragraph 13 of the report. As indicated in subparagraph 17 (h) of the report, the threat of non-conventionally armed missiles should be dealt with as the highest priority in any approach towards missiles within the framework of the United Nations.

4. With respect to paragraph 20 of the report, Iran underlines the need for a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory approach to address the complex issue of missiles in all its aspects. Such an approach has to include non-conventional as well as conventional aspects of the issue, along with peaceful and civilian applications of missile technology. It must also take into account the security concerns and conventional defensive needs of States. Such security concerns are much more evident in the regions where extraregional forces are present and the universality of international treaties banning weapons of mass destruction has not yet been achieved.

5. Regarding subparagraph 17 (e), the Islamic Republic of Iran fully agrees that the issue of the application of space-launch-vehicle technology for peaceful uses of outer space should be part of any comprehensive and balanced approach towards the issue of missiles in all its aspects. However, we disagree with positions that advocate denying the access of developing countries to civilian space technology, under the pretext of security concerns. Some developing countries have sought self-sufficiency in satellite launchers and independent access to space for a number of reasons. These are: the increased contribution of space-based capabilities to a wide range of human endeavours, the limited number of provider countries for

commercial space transportation services, the high cost of these services and the existence of recent examples of politicization and interruption of such services. To strike a balance between security concerns and the growing need for civilian application of space-launch-vehicle technology, Iran calls for the establishment of universally and regionally agreed arrangements aimed at promoting predictable and reliable international cooperation in this field.

6. As to the initiatives outside the United Nations, we are of the view that such efforts suffer from inherent shortcomings. These include non-transparent formation processes, an exclusive focus on non-proliferation and export control, a total disregard for disarmament goals, the application of a double-standard approach to the implementation of non-proliferation measures and the creation of impediments to the access of developing countries to peaceful space technology. Owing to their shortcomings, these initiatives have failed to achieve universal acceptance and legitimacy.

7. As noted in paragraph 16 of the report, the development of missile defence systems (regional and/or global) and its impact on international peace and security was one of the key issues that was raised and discussed in the panel. We believe the specific ongoing efforts to develop and deploy missile defence systems such as Aegis and THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defence) by extraregional forces in some regions would jeopardize regional and international peace and stability and, consequently, will lead to an arms race on the regional and global scales.

8. The report underscores the important role of the United Nations in providing an effective mechanism for identifying and building areas of consensus. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the United Nations, as the most encompassing and representative international body, is the appropriate forum for exploring and building potential areas of consensus on the complex issue of missiles. The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines the importance of continued efforts within the United Nations to address the issue of missiles in all its aspects in a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory manner. Towards this end, the continuation of deliberations within the United Nations, specifically focusing attention on areas of consensus, is advisable. As the next step in carrying forward the deliberations within the United Nations, we share the conclusion of the report in its paragraph 21 that it would be useful to try to develop understandings on how to categorize and describe missiles.